

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 11-18 and 21-23 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 5, 8 and 21-23 are independent. Claims 1-4, 8 and 21-23 have been allowed.

Notice of Appeal

It is believed that this Response puts the application in condition for allowance. However, in order to maintain pendency of the application while the Examiner considers the Response, a Notice of Appeal is submitted herewith. The Commissioner is authorized The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the appeal fee to Deposit Account No. 50-2298 (of Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps) for the appeal fee.

Petition for Extension of Time

A Petition for a three month extension of time is submitted herewith, extending the time for Response to the October 27, 2003 office action to Monday March 29, 2004. The 3-month extension fee of \$950 also is submitted herewith. A refund of this fee respectfully is requested. The reasons are that Applicant timely submitted a Response to the final office action on November 17, 2003, less than one month after the October 27 office action to which it was responsive; apparently the Examiner subsequently issued an advisory action, but that mailed action was not received until the Examiner as a courtesy faxed the cover page on March 24, 2003 – into the 3-month extension period.

Remarks on Response


The Examiner's courtesy in faxing the Advisory Action cover page on March 24, 2004. Still the accompanying reasons for have not been received. Regardless of those reasons, it is desired to expedite issuance of the patent based on the pending application, so the rejected independent claim, no. 5, has been cancelled. Some of its dependent claims have been amended to now depend from allowed independent claim 1 or one of its dependent claims and any remaining dependent claims have been cancelled. Claims 21 and 22 have been amended to correct a typo. Accordingly, the application now is in condition for allowance, since all the pending claims have been allowed, or depend from one of the allowed claims.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the application now is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to discuss remaining issues, if there are any. The Commissioner is authorized to charge payment (or credit any overpayment) to Deposit Account No. 50-2298 for any required additional fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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